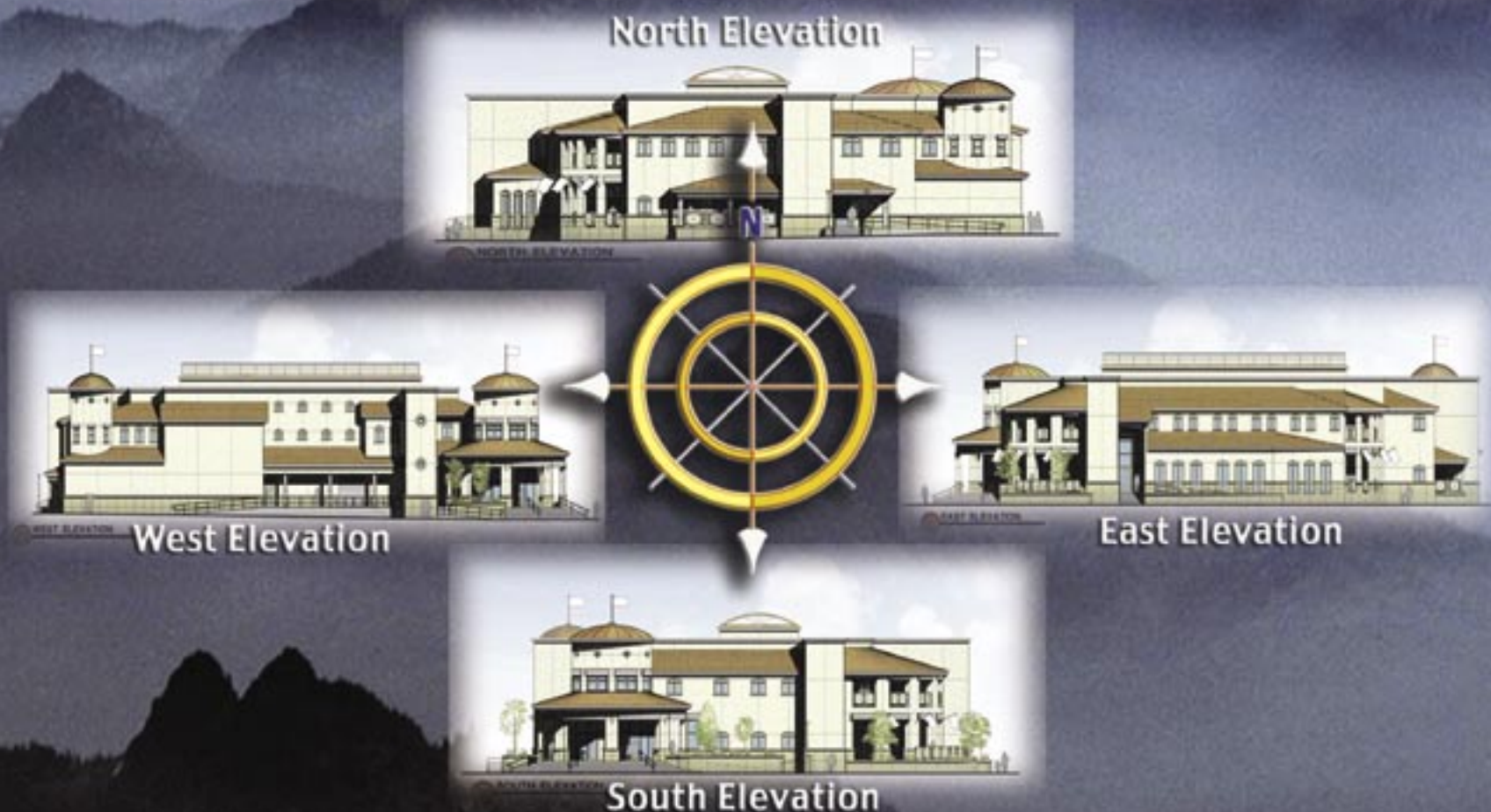


NCKRI BUILDING PROJECT

The National Cave and Karst Research Institute (NCKRI) staff has already immersed itself in a major “bricks-and-mortar” project. Approximately \$4.3 million has been allocated or pledged towards building a new research, education, and information management center near the banks of the Pecos River and downtown Carlsbad, New Mexico. As the year 2003 ended, NCKRI’s staff, along with our primary partners, were working on the preliminary design of the two-story building.

The Enabling Legislation directs that the headquarters for NCKRI be located in the vicinity of (but not in) Carlsbad Caverns National Park, making the City of Carlsbad, New Mexico, the obvious site for centering operations. The strong support of the City of Carlsbad and its leaders’ commitment to the Institute combined with the vision and funding of the National Park Service (NPS) and of the State of New Mexico through the New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology (New Mexico Tech) brought the three entities together in support of the Institute headquarters building.



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Financing for the approximately \$4.3 million building comes from three sources. The NPS has allocated \$1,956,900 towards the design and construction of the building. That money is in the process of being passed directly to the City of Carlsbad through a Cooperative Agreement. An additional \$1.340 million has been provided to the City of Carlsbad for the project from the State of New Mexico. The City also pledged nearly \$1 million of in-kind services towards the building that included the land and related infrastructure.

The February 2003 signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) by the Institute's three primary partners, the NPS, The City of Carlsbad, and New Mexico Tech, paved the way for the design and construction of a headquarters building for NCKRI. Among other



issues, the MOU established a basis for cooperation in planning the "Institute's physical facility" as well as any individual cooperative agreements related to the financing, construction, and operation of the Institute building.

As the year progressed, the three partners made great progress on the approximately 24,000 square foot building. The City of Carlsbad has proposed locating the building in a major riverside redevelopment area to be known as The Cascades. The NCKRI Building will anchor the commercial area to be built around a large canal water feature. Development of the Cascades is scheduled to occur on a parallel track with the Institute's building. Ground breaking is slated for mid- to late-2004.

In May, representatives from the three primary partners interviewed three potential Architecture and Engineering firms and recommended a joint venture team of Studio D Architects (Las Cruces, New Mexico) and Beryl Durham and Associates (Carlsbad, New Mexico). That recommendation was agreed to by the Carlsbad City Council, which accepted a bid from Studio D Architects and Beryl Durham and Associates in early summer 2003 to design and build the headquarters structure.

The Cascades, and the NCKRI Headquarters building, will feature Mediterranean Villa architecture with tile roofs, a canal-side esplanade and store fronts highlighted with terraces and awnings. The Cascades development plans call for open space areas accented with computer-run fountains and bridges that will tie together the theme of the development.

After receiving initial direction on the building from the NCKRI Director and the City of Carlsbad, the architect and engineering firms began their design work. They presented preliminary drawings to the Institute and its partners in November and revised them in December 2003. Construction documents will be finalized during early 2004.